

GOVERNMENT REBATES ON WOOD HEATERS - ESTIMATION OF ADVERSE HEALTH IMPACTS

4972. Hon Giz Watson to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for the Environment

I refer to Minister for the Environment media statement dated 23 May 2007, titled 'More wood heater rebates to help halt the haze this winter', and I ask -

- (1) Can the Minister state the specific names and types of 'particles' in the air from wood heaters which have been linked with adverse health effects, leading to significant health costs?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) Can the Minister explain how the recent research for the Department of Environment and Conservation estimating the cost of adverse health impacts from the use of wood heaters to be 18 million dollars per year, is being taken so seriously by the Government?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) Can the Minister explain in detail how a figure of 18 million dollars per year for health costs is calculated and justified?
- (6) If no to (5), why not?
- (7) Can the Minister state the specific types of 'adverse health impacts' that the particles in the air from wood heaters cause to people which lead to 'significant health costs'?
- (8) If no to (7), why not?

Hon SALLY TALBOT replied:

- (1) The wood heater policy options paper was released on 23 May. This document includes details of the names and types of particles in the air from wood heaters. This information is detailed in Appendix A: Chemical properties of wood heater emissions.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The wood heater policy options paper details the costs of adverse health impacts from the use of wood heaters attributed to wood smoke emissions in the Perth metropolitan region. It also details recommended actions to reduce these health impacts. These actions are ongoing community education, incentives for heating replacement or wood heater surrender, and legislation to include a requirement that at time of sale of a house, non-compliant wood heaters must be removed. The policy paper is still open for comment until 3 September 2007.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) The wood heater policy options paper includes details of calculations of health costs attributed to wood smoke emissions in the Perth metropolitan region. The rationale and factors considered to calculate this figure are outlined in Section 2.3 of the paper. In addition to this, further information is available in a supplementary document titled Cost-Benefit Analysis of Wood-Smoke Reduction in Perth which is available on DEC's website.
- (6) Not applicable.
- (7) Section 2.3 of the wood heater policy options paper outlines the adverse health impacts attributed to wood smoke emissions in the Perth metropolitan region. In addition to this, further information is available in a supplementary document titled Cost-Benefit Analysis of Wood-Smoke Reduction in Perth which is available on DEC's website.
- (8) Not applicable.